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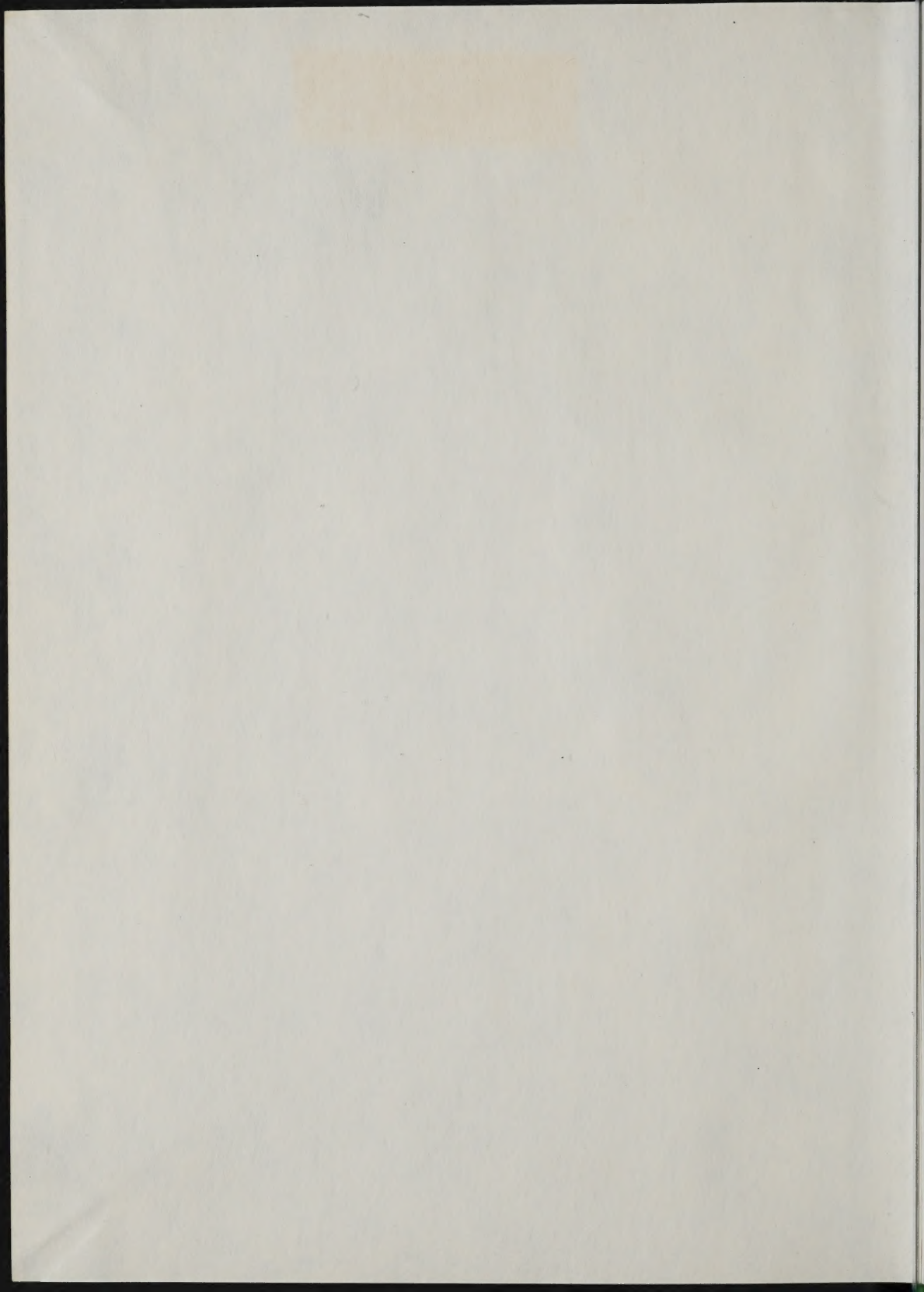
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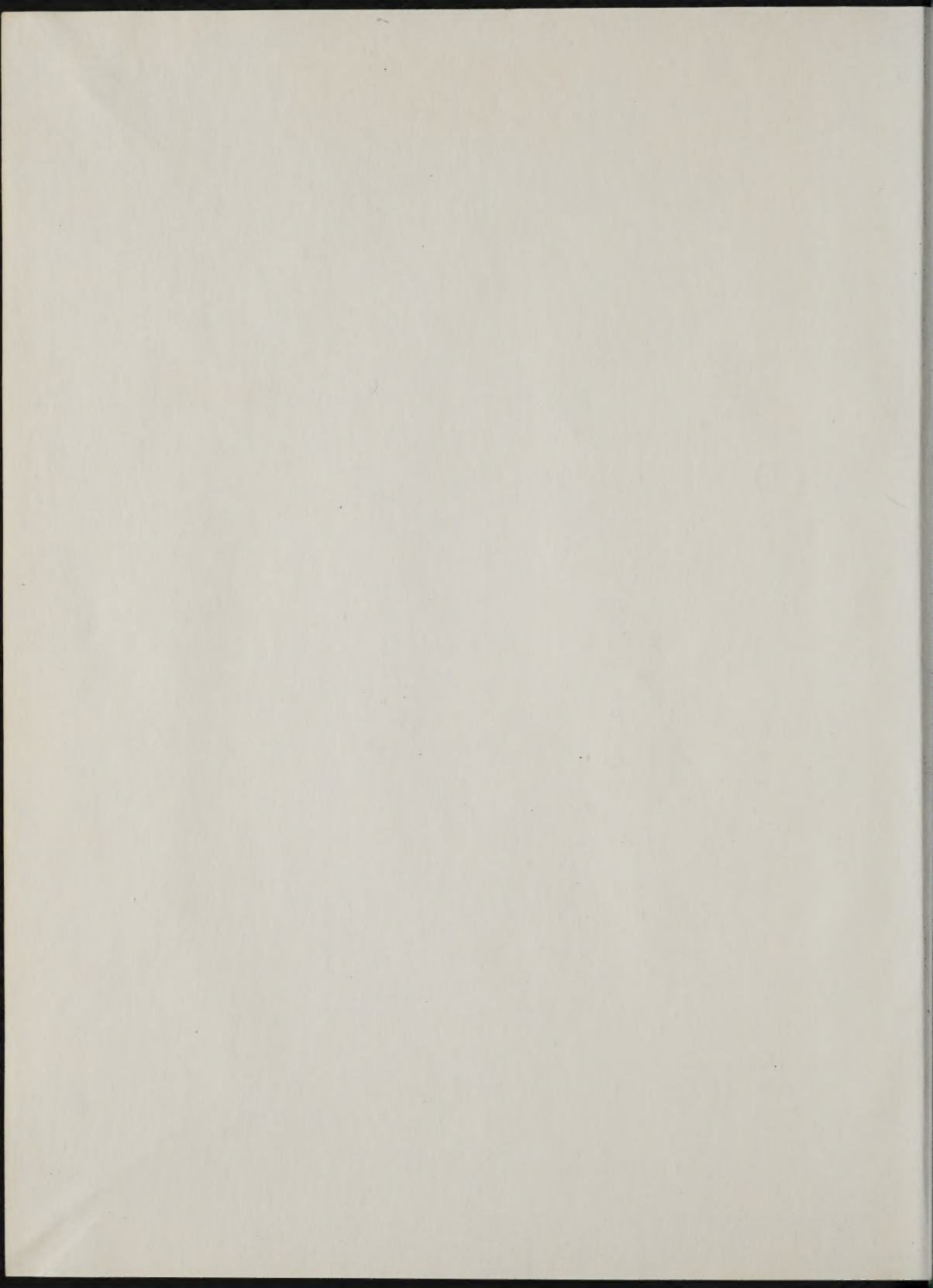
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HEROINES OF THE
AMERICAN REVOLUTION

BY
MRS. J. M. W. WILSON

NEW YORK
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HEROINES OF THE
Heroines of the
AMERICAN REVOLUTION

American Revolution

By

David James Harkness

Director of Program Planning and Library Services
Division of University Extension

THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE NEWSLETTER

Vol. XL, No. 1

February, 1961

Knoxville, Tenn.

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Martha Washington was a true heroine of the Revolution, for she became an army wife in the full sense of the term. Every winter from 1776 until the signing of the peace found the General's lady with the troops. Whatever cold weather stopped the army, there Martha drove up from Virginia, her coach completely filled with cooked foods from Mount Vernon. Her son, Jack Custis, died of typhoid during the Yorktown campaign, so she was a gold star mother of the Revolution also. Although she was often homesick for Mount Vernon, she maintained her exile in order to be near her husband and his men and to administer to their needs as best she could.

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THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE NEWSLETTER

Heroines of the American Revolution

The American Revolution is a period which fascinates everyone who appreciates the patriotic efforts of those early colonists who had a bright and shining dream of freedom and independence. When we think of patriots we naturally recall men like George Washington, Patrick Henry, Thomas Jefferson, Alexander Hamilton, Benjamin Franklin, Paul Revere, Samuel Adams, John Hancock, John Adams, Elbridge Gerry, Thomas Paine, Robert Livingston, John Jay, John Dickinson, James Madison, Philip Freneau, Jack Jouett, Henry Knox, Nathanael Greene, Ethan Allen, Israel Putnam, John Sevier, Francis Marion, and Daniel Morgan—or somewhat forgotten heroes like Caesar Rodney, Peter Francisco, Marinus Willet, Esck Hopkins, John Stark, Isaiah Thomas, John Manly, Israel Bissell, Jimmy Blair, John Hanson, William Dawes, Samuel Prescott, William Jasper, John Barry, John Honeyman, and William Maxwell—but the distaff side of the Revolutionary War deserves recognition also. Some of these women won nation-wide and even international fame, while other humbler characters, “the unsung heroines,” enjoyed a little local renown in their own day but are generally forgotten now. They too helped to make history in their own ways and merit a word of remembrance. These historic ladies—gallant, brave, self-sacrificing, devoted to the ideal of freedom—make up a truly memorable gallery of immortals. Their courage and heroism in time of crisis saved the day and made the difference between victory and defeat for the Colonial forces.

Martha Washington was a true heroine of the Revolution, for she became an army wife in the full sense of the term. Every winter from 1776 until the signing of the peace found the General's lady with the troops. Wherever cold weather stopped the army, there Martha drove up from Virginia, her coach completely filled with cooked foods from Mount Vernon. Her son, Jack Custis, died of typhoid during the Yorktown campaign, so she was a gold star mother of the Revolution also. Although she was often homesick for Mount Vernon, she maintained her exile in order to be near her husband and his men and to administer to their needs as best she could.

Everywhere the soldiers loved Lady Washington, as they called her. During the winter at Valley Forge, when the army was in desperate straits, suffering greatly from lack of food and blankets and clothing, and the consequent constant sickness, she went to share the soldiers' privation and make a spot of cheer in their dreary lives. She was a staunch patriot. She made light of inconveniences and discomforts and hardships. She kept busy during that dismal winter, carrying delicacies for the sick and consolation for the dying—by her sympathy and generosity stimulating the loyalty and courage of the men. "God bless Lady Washington!" was frequently heard when her kind, motherly face appeared.

Martha directed the officers' wives in knitting, sewing, patching, and the making of new garments whenever materials could be secured. She was the perfect wife for "the greatest of our soldiers and the purest of our patriots," as the Father of His Country has been called. "Washington's Lady" is a biography of this gracious and patriotic heroine by Elswyth Thane, who wrote the novel of Williamsburg during the Revolution titled "Dawn's Early Light." "Martha's Husband" is an informal biography of George Washington by Blair Niles. "Man From Mount Vernon" is a 1961 biographical novel by Burke Boyce. "The Unvanquished" is a novel of George Washington by Howard Fast, who gave us the novel of Valley Forge titled "Conceived in Liberty" and the 1961 novel about the Battles of Lexington and Concord titled "April Morning." "The Strong Men" by John Brick is a 1959 novel about Valley Forge. David Taylor is the author of the novel "Farewell to Valley Forge" and F. Van Wyck Mason wrote the novelette titled "Valley Forge: 24 December, 1777."

Catherine Greene, the wife of Washington's second-in-command, General Nathanael Greene, charmed everyone who knew her. A woman of rare beauty, great vivacity, a lively wit, and a merry ringing laugh, she was called "Caty" Greene. The Washingtons loved her. So did the commander's young aides and a dozen others in high position. The list of her admirers and life-long friends is a veritable roster of the great names of the Revolution. All of them in turn warmed cold toes and colder, despairing hearts at her fireside and, listening to her bright voice, found courage and hope returning. Her house at Valley Forge was a hut little larger than those in which the rank and file starved and froze, but it became a social center because of Caty's hospitality.

Caty Greene's charms helped to create a nation, for she boosted the morale of officers and soldiers during the dark days of the Revolution. With courage she faced those trying times. She followed her husband from the frozen hills of Morristown, New Jersey to a fever-infested camp near

Charleston, South Carolina in the last year of fighting. She went through misery and exaltation, suffering and joy, and bravely faced situations which had to be if the war was to be won. She became the darling of the oddest and most incredible army in history—a true heroine who raised the spirits of the Revolutionary heroes. "Let My Name Stand Fair" is a novel of Catherine Greene by Shirley Seifert. General Nathanael Greene is a figure in the novel "The Ragged Ones" by Burke Davis, who also wrote one titled "Yorktown."

Mercy Otis Warren, as much as any one person, fanned the flame of the American Revolution. Slight of stature, quiet in her speech, this young Massachusetts housewife waged her own devastatingly effective battle against the mighty British Empire. Working with her ill-starred brother James Otis, her husband James Warren, and her friends and co-revolutionists Samuel Adams, Thomas Jefferson, and Elbridge Gerry, Mercy played a vital part in the behind-the-scenes intrigues of New England revolutionary politics and produced a series of mocking political satires which rallied patriotic sentiment throughout the Colonies. Copley painted the portrait of Mrs. James Warren which is in the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. "First Lady of the Revolution" is a biography of this heroine by Katharine Anthony.

Mary Lindley Murray, a Quaker belle from Philadelphia who had married Robert Murray, a rich merchant and landowner of New York who was a Tory and loyal to the Crown, gave aid to General Washington on September 15, 1776 and won for herself a place in history. Her contribution to the War of Independence was woman's wit and beauty. She was a lady of great dignity and stateliness of manner, mild and amiable, quick at repartee. She and her daughters were ardent patriots and followed the movements of the Continental Army with interest and sympathy. On the day that five British men-of-war sailed up the East River and anchored opposite the Murray house, which was on a hill near the center of Manhattan Island (now Murray Hill), Mary watched the patriots retreat. Eighty-four boats landed the British soldiers and up the bank clambered thousands of Redcoats, driving the Americans before them. Mary Murray watched General Israel Putnam and his men and realized they were in danger. So, in order to give them time to get away, she decided to invite General Howe and his staff in to dine with her.

When Howe said he must first catch "that rascally Yankee, Putnam," Mrs. Murray insisted he had gone. "It is too late to catch him," she said. "Pursuit is hopeless. Thee had better come in and dine." It was a hot, dry, dusty day, and the men were tired and hungry. So Generals Howe,

Clinton, and Cornwallis, Governor Tryon, and others came into the cool attractive house. Mrs. Murray and her beautiful daughters proved charming hostesses, with a warm welcome for their English guests. The good merchant, who was known to be heartily loyal to the King, was not at home, but his rare old Madeira wine was served with dainty cakes after the dinner. The talk was witty and delightful—and Mrs. Murray prolonged their stay. Meanwhile Putnam's men, led by Alexander Hamilton and Aaron Burr, made their way to the heights of Harlem, where they saw Washington's tents and knew they were safe. Through Mary Murray's hospitality the British had lost their chance to take 4,000 prisoners. Her own wit and her husband's wine had saved the day. Mrs. Murray proved that patriotism and courage do not exist only behind a bayonet. She was heroic in her own peculiar way and thus rendered a great service to the patriots. The British admitted that Howe's delay at the Murray home was the reason for Putnam's escape and the Americans said with pride that the beautiful Quaker lady had saved "Old Put" and his 4,000 men. Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart used this interesting incident as the basis for their musical play titled "Dearest Enemy," which contains the memorable song "Here in My Arms."

All through the Revolution Margaret (Molly) Corbin, who was 25, marched with her husband John's artillery as cook, nurse and laundress. On November 15, 1776 she crouched inside Fort Mifflin on Long Island under heavy attack by British troops. As Molly watched her husband fire one cannon in a two-cannon battery, a bullet cut down the other gunner. Without hesitation, Molly took his place. When her husband dropped, mortally wounded, she kept on firing. After the battle the British found her at the gun, one arm hanging by a thread, her chest shattered. Miraculously, she recovered. This heroine of the Battle of Red Bank Heights was the first woman who ever fought for the United States—and, seriously wounded, the first to be pensioned. Often confused with Molly Pitcher, another girl cannoneer of the Revolution, Molly Corbin now lies alongside U. S. soldiers in the West Point cemetery, but only after long-memoried patriots rescued her from an obscure grave.

Mary Ludwig, the daughter of a German settler, was born on a small farm between Princeton and Trenton in New Jersey. A typical German peasant girl, heavy-set, strong and sturdy, she toiled in the fields, milked the cows and drove them to pasture. The story is that this stocky woman could swing a three-bushel sack of wheat to her shoulder and carry it to the upstairs room of the granary. This strength and endurance stood her in good stead years later, for after the Battle of Princeton she picked

The first thing I noticed when I stepped out of the car was the cold. It was a sharp, biting cold that seemed to penetrate my coat. I shivered as I walked towards the entrance of the building. The air was thick with the scent of old wood and the faint, distant smell of coffee. I had heard that the office was old, but I didn't realize how old it would be. The walls were made of dark, polished wood, and the floors were covered in a thick, dark carpet. The lighting was dim, with only a few small lamps providing a warm glow. I felt a sense of unease as I walked through the corridors. The silence was oppressive, and the shadows seemed to be watching me. I had never before, and I was sure I never would again.

I had been told that the office was a good place to work. It was quiet, and the people who worked there were friendly. But now, as I walked through the corridors, I felt a sense of dread. The walls seemed to be closing in on me, and the shadows seemed to be reaching out to grab me. I had never before, and I was sure I never would again. The silence was oppressive, and the shadows seemed to be watching me. I had never before, and I was sure I never would again.

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up a wounded soldier, carried him two miles to a farmhouse, and there nursed him back to health. Mary married an Irish barber named John Hays, who went as a gunner in the artillery during the Revolution. Molly, as she was called, was visiting her husband in camp. During the war it was not unusual for wives to accompany their soldier husbands, not to fight but to wash and mend and cook and care for the sick and wounded. Once while she was cooking for the men she had a large kettle over the fire which she wanted to remove, so she called to a passing soldier to help her. His prompt compliance and kindness of manner made her ask his name. She was so astonished that she almost dropped the kettle when she heard his reply: "I am General Washington."

The day of the Battle of Monmouth, June 28, 1778, was hot and sultry beyond endurance. Men fainting from sunstroke dropped to the earth. Molly went back and forth to the spring, carrying water for the suffering men and wetting the sponges to swab out the cannon. The weary, thirsty soldiers, welcoming the sight of her with cool sparkling water, would call out gratefully, "Here comes Molly with her pitcher"—a call soon shortened to "Molly Pitcher!" Thus Mary Hays won her *nom de guerre*. On one of her trips from the spring Molly saw her husband fall suddenly. Accounts differ as to whether he was wounded or had a sunstroke while working in the blistering heat near the cannon. General Henry Knox, in charge of the battery, had no competent man to put in Hays' place and was about to withdraw the gun when Molly sprang forward, seized the rammer and fired. A moment was sufficient to show that she could fill her husband's position and that she had the strength and nerve for his task. The men cheered as she loaded and fired shot after shot with the skill of a veteran gunner. Her hair disheveled, her eyes blazing, her hot face begrimed with powder and smoke and dust, barefooted like many of the soldiers, she kept on with her perilous work. This brave act of "Molly Pitcher" made a great impression on the soldiers and helped to boost their morale. The story of her heroism spread through the camp. The next morning in her dusty, torn, powder-stained dress, she was presented to General Washington. With such honor as he would have shown to one of his gallant men, he spoke a few words of sympathy and praise, gave her a sergeant's commission, and later placed her on the list of half-pay officers for life.

Still another Molly is Elizabeth Page Stark, the wife of Colonel (later General) John Stark, who lived in Manchester, New Hampshire. She was noted for her strong, energetic decision of character. Once when her husband was camped on the northern frontier near Ticonderoga, Molly

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sent word to him to send the sick soldiers home to her. She turned her house into a hospital and became nurse and physician combined and lost not a single patient. When the news arrived of the invasion of Boston harbor by the British, John Stark was at work in his sawmill. Without stopping to go home and in his shirt sleeves he sprang upon his horse and hurried on, recruiting his neighbors and friends as he went. He sent word home to have his regimentals sent to him. Molly immediately bundled up his clothes and, mounting a horse, followed, hoping soon to overtake him, but did not do so until she reached Medford. Here she delivered the uniform, stopped overnight, and then retraced her lonely way through the unbroken forest to her home. Molly Stark was in camp with her husband during the evacuation of Boston by the British. The colonel ordered his wife to mount horseback after the embarkation of the troops and remain in sight to watch the result. If the party were fired upon she was directed to ride into the country and arouse the people, thus spreading the alarm. Molly served well in her post as sentinel, keeping a watchful eye to see that the troops made their passage over the river unmolested. She observed them land and take possession of the battery. Molly was ready to ride on a moment's notice and thus proved her vigilance in time of peril. On one occasion she tore up her flannel petticoat to use in making cartridges for use in the fighting, which further added to her popularity as a heroine who was always ready to meet any emergency.

Nancy Hanson of Delaware snatched two derring-do officers of the Continental Army from British nooses. After the Battle of Brandywine she so befuddled a British officer with blandishment and coquetry that he unwittingly got her a carriage and two long redingotes to cover the uniforms of two Colonial officers in imminent danger of their lives. But the ruse was discovered and a dozen British dragoons came galloping in pursuit, with pistols blazing. The Americans had to return the fire—and the comely Nancy did some very fancy shooting herself in close support. Her daring and brilliant courage under fire endeared her to the hearts of the two men she rescued as well as to all who heard of her clever deed.

Elizabeth Griscom Ross, whose father had helped to build Independence Hall in Philadelphia, was a widow whose husband had been killed by an accidental explosion of gunpowder while on sentry duty with the Pennsylvania militia. In the summer of 1777 General Washington came to her house on Arch Street, where she carried on her husband's upholstery business, and asked her if she could make a flag for the Continental Army. She made some valuable suggestions regarding the design of the flag. The Stars and Stripes banner which she made was carried into the hall of

Congress and there approved officially as the American flag. Betsy Ross received the contract to make all the flags for the government and this contract continued in force long after the Revolutionary War was won. The Betsy Ross House is a permanent memorial in Philadelphia and is known today as the American Flag House. "Enough Good Men" by Charles Mercer is a 1960 novel set in Philadelphia during the Revolution.

Lydia Darrah of Philadelphia, 45 and widowed by the War of Independence, was in bed on a cold winter's night in December of 1777. Four British officers knocked on her door and asked for lodging for the night. The British had been using her house as a center for their secret conferences away from headquarters. These men went quietly into the back parlor, which had become their conference room. Mrs. Darrah's curiosity got the best of her, so she left her warm resting place and crept stealthily down the stairs to the closed parlor door. She put her left ear to the keyhole and overheard conversation about a planned attack on General Washington at White Marsh. She quietly tiptoed back to her room, anxiety and fear accelerating her heartbeat. Her fear was not only for the American army at White Marsh but for her only son, Edward, who was on special duty there with General Washington. As soon as the British left the house, Mrs. Darrah said she would go to Frankfurt and get some flour from the mill. She obtained a pass from General Howe, because she had co-operated with his officers. After getting through the British lines she went on to Frankfurt, urging her horse to a fast gallop. Leaving her flour bags with the miller, she approached the American lines, where she was at first taken for a spy. She finally got to Captain Craig and told him the plans of the British to make a surprise attack on White Marsh. Thus by informing on the Redcoats she saved the day for the Colonial army and also for her son.

Sally Townsend, a brave and patriotic girl living in the town of Oyster Bay on Long Island, New York was an important figure at a dangerous crisis of the war. In 1780 when Long Island fell into the hands of the British, the Townsends, who were ardent patriots, had to have enemy officers quartered in their home. One of these men was an especially handsome, talented, and charming young major named John André. He became quite devoted to "the adorable Miss Sarah," as he called Sally. Her brother was one of General Washington's most efficient secret agents in New York City and she sometimes managed to smuggle news out to him from Oyster Bay. One day he contrived to get a message back to her which said that there was a spy somewhere around their home, Raynham Hall, and that she must keep a sharp eye out for him. By watching the movements of Major André, Sally discovered that he was the "John Anderson" to whom mysterious

letters had been addressed. She overheard a conversation between André and Colonel Simcoe of the Queen's Rangers in which the name "West Point" was repeated several times. Sally got word to her brother in New York and he in turn sent a message to another secret agent in Westchester, who discovered that General Benedict Arnold at West Point was plotting with General Clinton in New York to have the American stronghold on the Hudson delivered over to the British. André was captured and hanged, but Benedict Arnold, the traitor, escaped. Sally Townsend liked John André and was sorry that she had identified him as a spy in the plot and had thus sent him to the scaffold. Her quick wit and prompt action probably did more than anything else to frustrate the plot by which Benedict Arnold had planned to surrender West Point. Sally never married and today Raynham Hall is a shrine which is visited by many admirers of this girl whose courage in time of great danger made her a real heroine, even when it meant going against the dictates of her heart and her own personal feelings.

Hannah Thurston Arnett lived in Elizabeth, New Jersey during the desperate days of December, 1776. After Cornwallis had driven Washington from New York, he offered amnesty to all who would swear allegiance to the Crown within sixty days. The offer was tempting to some of the citizens of Elizabeth, who shared the general despondency of the Colonists. When a group of American leaders, including her husband Isaac, met at the Arnett home in a despairing council that leaned toward acceptance of the British offer of amnesty, Hannah rekindled courage and the will to resist by denouncing would-be traitors to the Revolution. In an adjoining room she sat, knitting and listening, while the men met to discuss the proposition. When she could stand it no longer, she flounced into the debate, ignoring her husband's efforts to keep his wife in her place. "We may be poor and weak and few," Hannah said, "England may have her limitless resources. But we have something that England has not. God is on our side. Every volley from our muskets is an echo of His voice. Shame upon you cowards!" She even threatened to leave her beloved husband if he should forsake the cause of freedom. Thus she used woman's greatest and most powerful weapon to win her point.

Mary Draper of Dedham, Massachusetts was a forerunner of Red Cross, Salvation Army, and USO workers who have served coffee and doughnuts to service men. When the fighting opened around Boston and the "embattled farmers" began drifting past her house, she set up a booth on the roadside where she dispensed brown bread and cider. Her hospitality endeared her to the men. Mary stayed up nights to knead the dough, tend the wood-stoked oven, and shovel out the loaves. She was often

weary but always indefatigable, determined that no soldier should go hungry for want of something nourishing from her kitchen. She would stand at her roadside counter, ladling out cider and telling her visitors what she would do to those dastardly Redcoats if she were a man.

Deborah Samson evidently felt the same way, only she determined not to let her sex stand in the way. She came from Plymouth, Massachusetts and had the names of two Old Testament fighters of great strength. She was a farm laborer, big and strong and tall for a woman. She was a bound girl, an indentured servant, who taught district school for an entire summer term in order to obtain the twelve dollars that she needed to outfit herself as a man. When she had made a suit of men's clothes she emerged as "Robert Shirliffe," on his way to enlist in the Continental Army in October of 1778. She joined a Massachusetts company and cut the uniform to make it fit better, explaining that she, "Private Shirliffe," had been apprenticed to a tailor. The story was good enough to pass. For three years Deborah Samson was a common soldier. She was twice wounded, the first time a head injury. The second wound, a severe one, was to prove her undoing, for she was sent to an army hospital, where the surgeon discovered that his patient was a woman. When she recovered she was given a letter to deliver to General Washington. He said not a word, but in silence handed her a discharge. He also provided sufficient money to take her home. Later tradition says that after Washington became President he invited Deborah Samson, the Amazon of the Revolution, to visit him.

Sibyl Ludington, a sixteen-year-old girl living in Putnam County, New York outdid Paul Revere, a strong man of forty at the time of his famous ride of about twelve miles over what passed then for good roads. This country girl two years later rode over rough trails, in danger of Indians and wild animals, for an estimated twenty-five to forty miles. It was imperative to get word to the scattered militia commanded by her father, Colonel Henry Ludington, so they could come to the rescue of supplies which had been taken by two thousand British regulars under General Tryon at Danbury, Connecticut. It was necessary for the colonel to be at home to muster the men as they arrived. A messenger who had been shot in the fighting arrived at the Ludington home after a twenty-five-mile ride, too weary to go any further. Sibyl was ready and willing to start at a minute's notice, for she knew the wild country and where each neighbor was located. Her night ride roused the Colonials, who made their way to Danbury under her father's leadership, and thus the patriots soon had the British in retreat to their boats.

Elizabeth Zane, the younger sister of Colonel Ebenezer Zane, the

founder of Zanesville, Ohio grew up around Fort Henry, across the river. While still in her teens, on a visit to her brother's home from school in Philadelphia, she saved the fort at great risk to her own life. The last battle of the Revolution was the siege of Fort Henry (now Wheeling, West Virginia) in 1782. Successive attacks by the Indians on the fort had reduced its garrison of forty men to twelve. They were running short of powder and a number of young men volunteered to go for more from a supply stored in the strongly fortified house of Colonel Zane, about 150 yards away. The commander was trying to decide which man he could best spare to risk the chance of getting it, when Betty Zane volunteered. She insisted that she be allowed to go, saying, "'Tis better a maid than a man should die." Her request was granted, the gates were unbarred, and she ran for the house. The Indians, amused at her frantic dash, withheld their fire, crying: "A squaw, a squaw!" But when she emerged from the house carrying a load of powder in a tablecloth tied around her waist, they realized her intention and fired at her. Shots pierced her skirts, but Betty, unhurt, reached the fort with the precious ammunition. The Betty Zane Monument at the entrance to Walnut Grove Cemetery in Martins Ferry, Ohio is a sculptured likeness of this girl, paid for by pennies collected by the school children. On her grave is the inscription: "Betty Zane. Heroine of Fort Henry." Zane Grey, who was a dentist in Zanesville, Ohio, sold his office equipment to get his first book published. It was the story of his famous ancestor and the novel is titled "Betty Zane." No publisher would take it in 1904, but the future author of such popular Westerns as "Riders of the Purple Sage" and "Desert Gold" wanted everyone to know about the heroism of this Revolutionary figure who rose to the occasion and aided greatly in the repulse of the attack on Fort Henry.

Jane McCrea was on her way to the British lines to visit her fiancé, Lieutenant David Jones, a young loyalist officer with General Burgoyne, when she was murdered and scalped by Indians in British employ who were over-eager to earn the bounty for American scalps. This atrocity was used by the patriots as a weapon of anti-British propaganda. The horrible event roused so many to join the patriot army that some historians have asserted that the Revolution was won by the murder of Jane McCrea. She was a true martyr and her death did much to crystallize loyalties among the colonists and thus recruit militia for the American forces. She is buried in Fort Edward, New York near the Vermont line. The women at Fort Vengeance near Pittsfield, Vermont deserve mention because once when a Tory and Indian raid found the townsmen away scouting, their firing posts were filled by the women until the men returned. The colonial women often took the places of their men in fighting and holding out against

privation and the enemy, proving that they were real heroines in time of peril.

The rest of our Revolutionary War heroines are Southern girls. Betsy Dowdy, a sixteen-year-old girl, saved the people in Currituck County on the eastern shore of North Carolina from British attack by her intrepid ride in December, 1775. She rode her banker pony across deep inlets and through fearful swamps all night from the dunes of Currituck to General William Skinner's headquarters in Perquimans, fifty miles away, to warn him to go to Colonel Robert Howe's aid at Great Bridge, Virginia. There was danger that the British would defeat the small American force there, invade North Carolina, and pillage the homes of the people on the Outer Banks. The Battle of Great Bridge was won, Dunmore evacuated Norfolk, and eastern Carolina was saved from British invasion—all because Betsy Dowdy made her famous ride. Mrs. Kerenhappuch Turner of Maryland rode a horse from Maryland all the way to North Carolina to nurse a son who was wounded at the Battle of Guilford Courthouse. Paul Revere rode a little over twelve miles; Mrs. Turner rode more than three hundred miles. There is a life-sized bronze statue of this woman in Guilford Courthouse National Military Park near Greensboro, one of the earliest monuments to an American heroine.

Behethland (Bess) Moore was a vigorous young lady who lived in the small village of Edgefield, South Carolina. Here she was talked about for her dislike of the Royalist sympathizers and for the violent and original ways she expressed her feelings. Bess loved two things—the cause of American liberty and Billy Butler, a lieutenant in the Continental Army under Captain Wallace. One night she learned that the British were planning to trap Billy and his comrades. She and her younger brother set out to warn the patriots in the only way they could—by paddling a small dugout down the river. Peering into the inky blackness and fighting their way through treacherous rapids, they managed to reach the American troops. Their timely arrival saved hundreds of men. The British marched the next morning against an American force that wasn't there. Bess Moore's bravery and determination helped save the lives of many men who were to fight in the Battles of Cowpens and Yorktown and to see the surrender of Cornwallis. Bess married Billy Butler, who became the Honorable Congressman William S. Butler. They had six sons. Four went West and one became Governor of a Western state and another helped build a trans-continental railroad.

When General Nathanael Greene called for a courier in May, 1781 to deliver a message to General Sumter in Wateree Swamp, across country

so overrun with Tories that no man could expect to get through, Emily Geiger volunteered. When Greene protested the danger involved, this South Carolina girl insisted the mission would be an easy one for her. The general finally gave in. On her second day out, Emily was intercepted by Rawdon's scouts and locked in a room alone. While waiting search by an old Tory matron, the girl hurriedly memorized the message and swallowed the paper. Released when no damaging evidence was discovered, Emily completed her journey and delivered the message verbally. A tablet in memory of Emily Geiger's Ride was erected in the State House in Columbia by the South Carolina Daughters of the American Revolution in 1900.

Dacey Langston was a brave and patriotic girl of sixteen in the Laurens District of South Carolina. Her father was a Whig and her brother was in Sumter's army. She was continually getting valuable information about the movement of the Tories and giving it to the Whigs. Once when she heard that Cunningham and his scouts were about to attack a settlement in which her near relatives lived, she left home at midnight to warn them. She sped through swamps and thickets and across running streams until she reached the Tiger River, which was swollen, making the ford very dangerous. Dacey pushed into the river in the darkness and in the channel, neck deep, she became confused. But she got to the shore, gave the warning, and when the scouts came the inhabitants had fled to a place of safety. One day she was captured by some Tories and ordered to give the information which she had obtained about a Whig neighborhood. She positively refused. The leader, placing a pistol at her breast, said: "Tell, or you shall die in your tracks." Dacey snatched off a long kerchief which covered her neck and bosom and said, "Shoot me, if you dare." The Tory was about to fire, when a companion threw up his hand and saved the brave girl's life.

✓ Mary Videau, still another South Carolina heroine and the fiancée of General Francis Marion, distinguished herself as a spy and got valuable information behind the enemy lines which helped "the Swamp Fox" in his daring raids. Her courage and self-sacrificial work were of inestimable help to the guerrilla leader. One time she fearlessly boarded a British prison ship in Charleston harbor, pretending to be a visitor with a pass giving her permission to see some relatives who had been taken as prisoners of war. She told the British captain that she was not a Rebel but a Loyalist. She asked to see her kinfolks and was granted permission. She was taken to the hold, where the prisoners were whipped and given terrible treatment. She recognized a friend, Colonial Captain Richardson, and got him re-

lieved from a whipping. She greeted four other prisoners as her "brothers" and then asked to stay on board as a nurse for the prisoners, who were in desperate need of medical aid. She carried news of his wife and daughter to Captain Richardson when serving him food in his cell. She was later recognized by a British officer and turned in as an escaped Rebel spy, to be kept under surveillance until her fate should be determined by Colonel Tarleton. Mary smuggled some weapons in to the prisoners, got the key from the guard, unlocked the men and helped them to escape. She substituted one of them for a dead man who was about to be delivered to a watery grave. She distributed guns and knives before the burial service. The "dead man" swam under water and unloosed a boat, which he brought back alongside the ship for use in getting Mary and the other prisoners away from the prison ship. They joined General Marion and his troops on Snow Island, and thus the guerrilla leader's fiancée returned to her beloved his old friend Captain Richardson and also her "four brothers," the Selby men from North Carolina, as recruits for his band of patriots. Novels about Francis Marion are "Phantom Fortress" by Bruce Lancaster. "The Ragged Ones" by Burke Davis, "The Red Doe" by Drayton Mayrant, and "No Time for Fear" by Davenport Steward. "The Long March" by Jane Barry is a novel about Daniel Morgan.

Rebecca Motte was a patriotic widow living at Fort Motte on the south side of the Congaree River in South Carolina. During the Battle of Fort Motte, British officers under the command of Captain McPherson, protecting a large store of powder, were quartered in Mrs. Motte's mansion-house. She and her family were compelled to occupy a servant's house on the estate. When the Americans approached under Francis Marion and Lighthorse Harry Lee, it was decided that the only way to compel the surrender of the garrison which had been reinforced by Lord Rawdon's troops was to burn the Motte mansion. Lee had made Mrs. Motte's dwelling his quarters, at her pressing invitation, and with his officers had shared her liberal hospitality. She had not only entertained the officers at her luxurious table, but had attended the sick and wounded and cheered the despondent. With deep regret Lieutenant Colonel Lee informed Mrs. Motte of the necessity for destroying her property. She smiled and declared that she was "gratified with the opportunity of contributing to the good of my country, and should view the approaching scene with delight." She even brought out some fire arrows given to her brother by a sea captain, urging her compatriots to destroy her home rather than permit the British to remain there. The Redcoats, realizing their danger, surrendered, and both Whigs and Tories scrambled up the roof to jerk out the flaming darts before the fire could reach the powder. But Rebecca Motte was perfectly willing to sacrifice her beautiful

home to promote the patriot cause—another example of the fortitude and heroism of our Revolutionary ladies.

Sarah Hawkins Sevier, the first wife of Colonel John Sevier, the hero of the Battle of King's Mountain, was a Virginia girl who came to the Watauga Settlement, which later became a part of Tennessee. The Watauga Association, organized in 1772, adopted the first constitution drawn up by native Americans for an independent government in what is now the United States. Sarah died in Virginia, but she had five sons defending the settlement and fighting for the cause of freedom with their father at King's Mountain, which was the turning-point of the Revolutionary War in the South. Novels about John Sevier are "King's Mountain" by Florette Henri, "Rogue's March" by Maristan Chapman, "The Carolinians" by Jane Barry, "Toil of the Brave" by Inglis Fletcher, and "The Sound of Chariots" and "Slow Dies the Thunder" both by Helen Topping Miller. Mary Patton was a Watauga Settlement girl living at Powder Branch who made the gunpowder fired by the Overmountain Men of East Tennessee at King's Mountain. There is a monument on the lawn of the Carter County Courthouse in Elizabethton honoring this pioneer heroine who made powder to assist the soldiers before their rendezvous at Sycamore Shoals on September 25, 1780, preparatory to going across the mountain to meet Major Patrick Ferguson and the Redcoats.

Catherine Sherrill Sevier, the second wife of Tennessee's first governor, often recalled her romantic meeting with the hero in buckskin at Fort Caswell on the Watauga when it was besieged by the Cherokee Indians in the summer of 1776. "I could gladly undergo that peril and effort again to fall into his arms and feel so out of danger," she would say, and then add, "But then it was all of God's good providence." Thus the first First Lady of Tennessee kept her faith in the Almighty in times of great peril. She would never consent to be shut up in a blockhouse during a raid, always saying: "The wife of John Sevier knows no fear. I neither skulk from duty nor from danger." Her favorite saying was: "I always trust in Providence." It was always a source of much gratification to her, and one of which she fondly boasted, that among the first work she did after her marriage was to make the clothes which her husband and three sons wore the day they were in the memorable Battle of King's Mountain. Thus "Bonnie Kate," the brave lass who was rescued from pursuit by the Indians by the most famous Indian fighter of the frontier, continued her gallant efforts in the fight for freedom.

Jemima Johnson proved her heroism at Bryant's Station in the Kentucky wilderness of 1782, when the Revolutionary War was almost ended,

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but before peace had come to the frontier. During an Indian attack at this pioneer outpost of "the Dark and Bloody Ground," near the present city of Lexington, she led the women of the fort down to the spring, where Indians were hiding, to fill the buckets so the men inside the stockade could continue fighting. It was a dangerous mission, for savages lurked in the forest, but Jemima knew that the lives of her five children depended on the success of the fighting which the men would do. It was unbearable inside the fort that hot August day—and the men had to have water. Her husband was away in Virginia, but Jemima volunteered to go and thus exhibited unusual daring in an emergency. It was a year of terror and savagery in the frontier settlements, but this woman saw her duty and did it.

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Nancy Morgan Hart refused to leave her Georgia farm on the Broad River in what is now Elbert County. She was a cousin of Daniel Boone and also kin to General Daniel Morgan, the Revolutionary hero. Most of her neighbors had fled from the Tory sympathizers who were terrorizing the region. It was not just a matter of pride, either. Nancy kept her home as a station for scouts carrying messages for Colonel Elijah Clark of the Continental Army. It was the summer of 1778, the third year of the Revolution, and Nancy wanted to be near her husband Benjamin, who was a captain with Clark's troops. It was a dangerous position for her to take, but Nancy had all the traditional courage of a frontier woman. Just as Deborah Samson was an Amazon of the North, Nancy Hart was an Amazon of the South. She was six feet tall and of almost masculine build, but a rather attractive brunette at that. Tall, angular, strong-limbed and muscular, she was the typical Spartan wife and mother of the time and place. Her courageous deeds during the Revolution have given rise to many stories. She was alone one evening when six Tories arrived at her cabin and demanded that she cook them a meal. Nancy began preparing an old turkey and sent her daughter Sukey for water. Near the spring was a conch shell, which Sukey used to summon her father from the field. Meanwhile Nancy, busy with her cooking, contrived to pass frequently between the Tories and their stacked guns. She had slipped two guns through a crack between the logs of the cabin when she was detected in putting through the third. The Tories sprang to their feet, but instantly Nancy threatened to shoot the first man who moved. As one advanced, she killed him. Seeing another gun, she fired again, and another Tory fell wounded. (Nancy is said to have been cross-eyed, but she was still a good shot). Hart and his neighbors, who had rushed to the cabin, wanted to shoot the captured men, but Nancy said shooting was too good for Tories; so they

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were taken to the woods and hanged. Thus this rugged, wilderness wife shot her way into history and became a legend in Georgia.

Another time Nancy Hart crossed and recrossed the Savannah River on a raft made of four logs tied together with grapevines in order to procure information for Georgia troops concerning the enemy camp in South Carolina. On still another occasion she is said to have donned the clothes of a man, boldly entered the British camp at Augusta and obtained information of much value to General Clark. Before Hart County, the only county in the state named for a woman, owned a courthouse, the Indians had named a little river for her—"War Woman Creek." Near Hartwell, the county seat, is a Nancy Hart Marker with a bronze tablet commemorating her bravery. There is a Nancy Hart Forest Park near Elberton which is maintained by local chapters of the Daughters of the American Revolution as a memorial to this sharp-shooting woman. Nancy Hart lived in the Elbert County region famous for Elberta peaches, but this Georgia peach of a fighter has a sweet potato named for her!

The brave women who lived on the Georgia and South Carolina frontier in 1780 represent a collective heroism that is remarkable. British soldiers and Indians would molest them while their men were carrying on guerrilla warfare, so it was arranged that the women and children, the aged, and boys too young for active fighting were to follow Colonel Elijah Clark and Colonel William Candler through almost 200 miles of mountain forests to the safety of patriot settlements on the Nolichucky and Watauga Rivers in what is now East Tennessee. In September 400 women and children, surrounded by danger from roving Indian bands and animals that stalked the trails, plunged northward through the wilderness. Starving, ragged, many of them ill, they reached the end of their brave journey eleven days later. For some reason, this almost incredible march has been largely overlooked in the history of the Revolution. Yet these women—bold, daring, intrepid, courageous, resourceful, ingenious, and above all loyal to the cause of freedom—stand as the epitome of the Heroines of the American Revolution.

